

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Social Survey 2009 The Jewish Population: The Place of Religion in Israeli Public Life

### Among the Jewish population aged 20 and over:

- 80% indicated that religion has a strong influence on life in Israel.
- 62% agreed that civil marriage ceremonies should be allowed for those who want them.
- 58% indicated that the relations between the religious and the secular are "not good."
- 57% were of the opinion that there should be separation between religion and state in Israel.
- 54% were of the opinion that the views of religious leaders should be heard in the process of policy-making.
- 53% agreed that religious studies should be intensified in state schools.

### Attitudes about the Sabbath atmosphere:

- 66% think that it is important to observe the Sabbath according to Jewish tradition.
- 64% support opening places of entertainment on the Sabbath.
- 60% support opening shopping centres and stores outside of cities on the Sabbath.
- 59% think that it is important to avoid paid work on the Sabbath (except emergency services, such as hospitals, ambulances, and fire department).
- 53% support operating public transportation on the Sabbath.
- 46% support opening shopping malls and stores within cities on the Sabbath.

*In the variable module of the Social Survey, which changes every year, the topics examined in breadth in 2009 were **religiosity, tradition, and family-related issues**. The survey's questions about religiosity included a variety of topics and perspectives on religiosity among the members of the different religious*

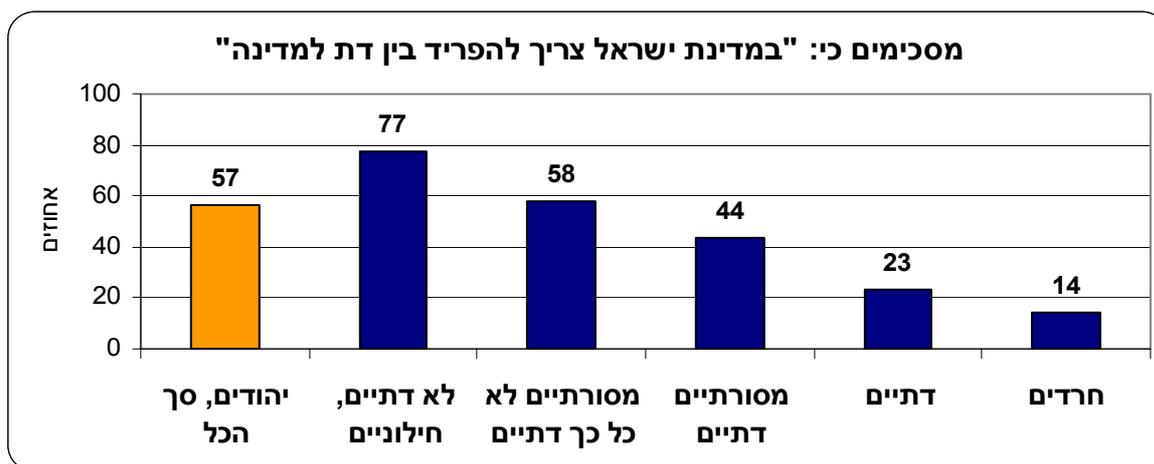
groups in Israel: Patterns of conduct, fulfillment of religious commandments, observance of the tradition, connection to religious and traditional values, changes in the level of religiosity during the course of life, and religious tolerance. This Press Release deals with the data on Jews' attitudes alone. [Information about the attitudes of Moslems was publicized in a Press Release on the occasion of the Feast of the Sacrifice last year \(Nov. 15, 2010\).](#)

Among the population of Jews aged 20 and over, 8% defined themselves as ultra-Orthodox, 12% religious, 13% traditional-religious, 25% traditional-not so religious, and 42% were non-religious or secular.

### Attitudes towards Religion and State

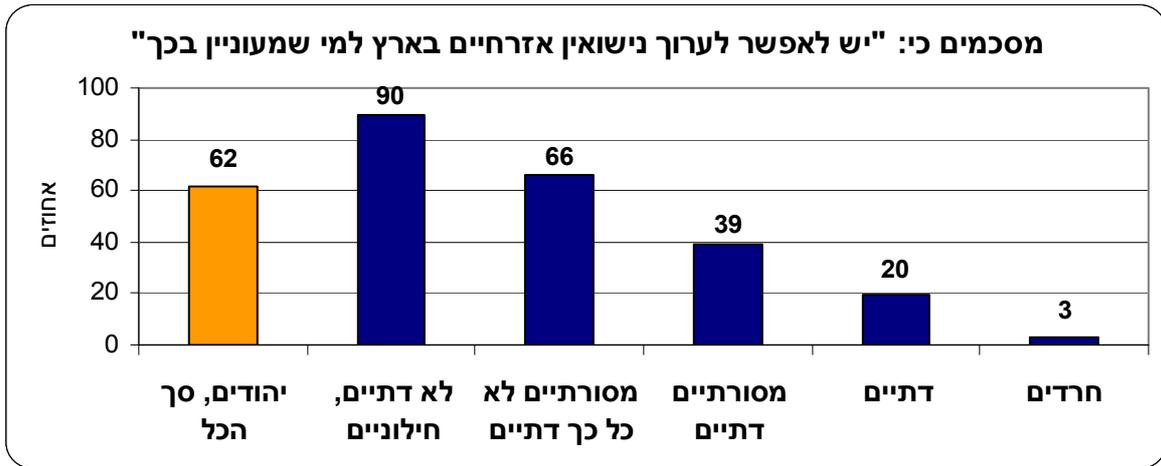
The 2009 Social Survey dealt with the topic of "religiosity," in which the respondents were asked to what extent they agree to various statements about the place of religion in Israeli public life.

**Agree that: "There should be a separation between religion and state in Israel"**



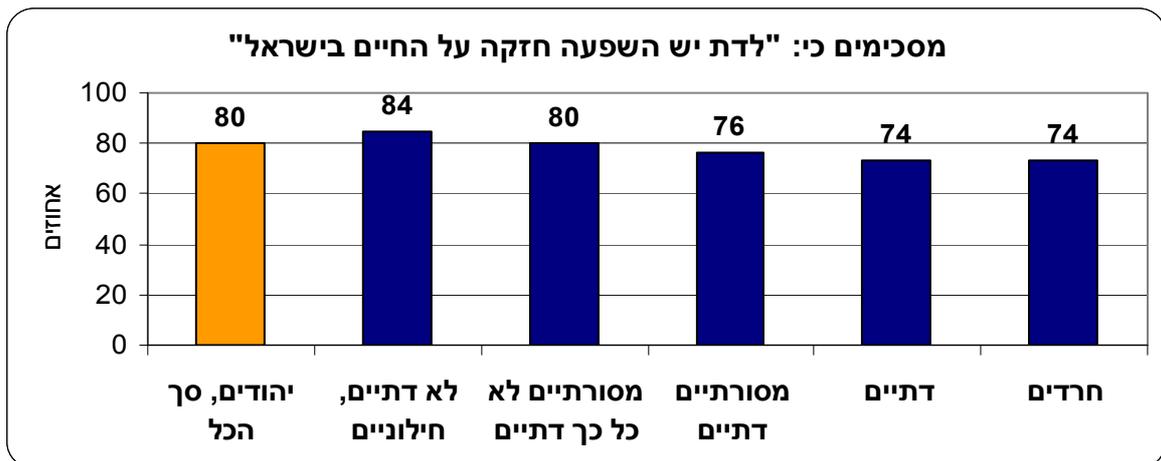
**Left to right:** Jews, total    Non-religious, secular    Traditional-not so religious  
 Traditional-religious    Religious    Ultra-Orthodox

Agree that: "Civil marriage ceremonies should be allowed in Israel for those who want them"



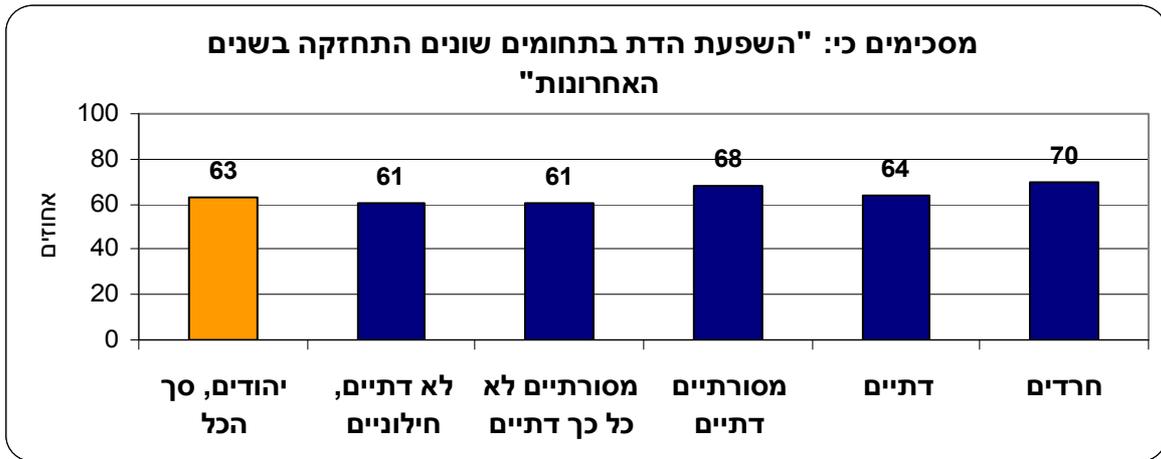
Left to right: Jews, total  
Traditional-religious      Non-religious, secular Religious      Traditional-not so religious Ultra-Orthodox

Agree that: "Religion has a strong impact on life in Israel"



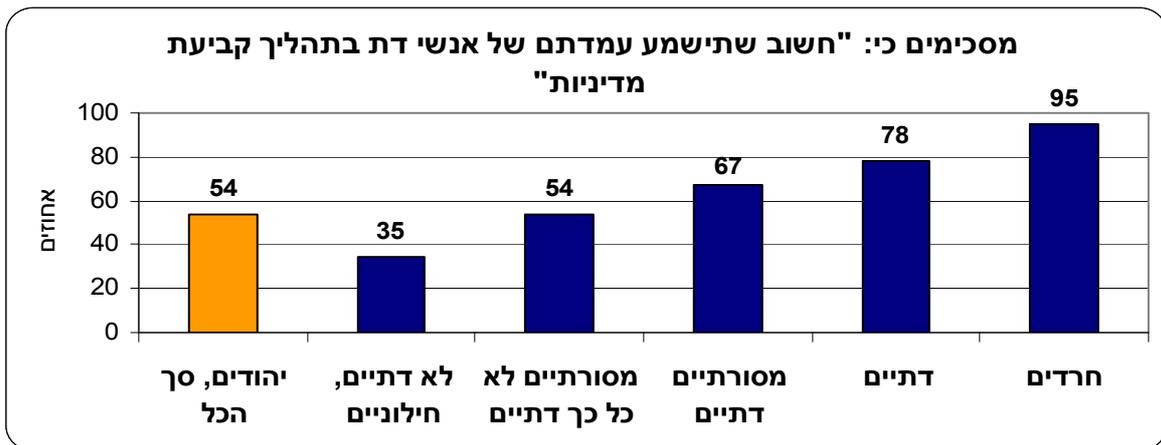
Left to right: Jews, total  
Traditional-religious      Non-religious, secular Religious      Traditional-not so religious Ultra-Orthodox

Agree that: "The impact of religion in various fields has become stronger in recent years"



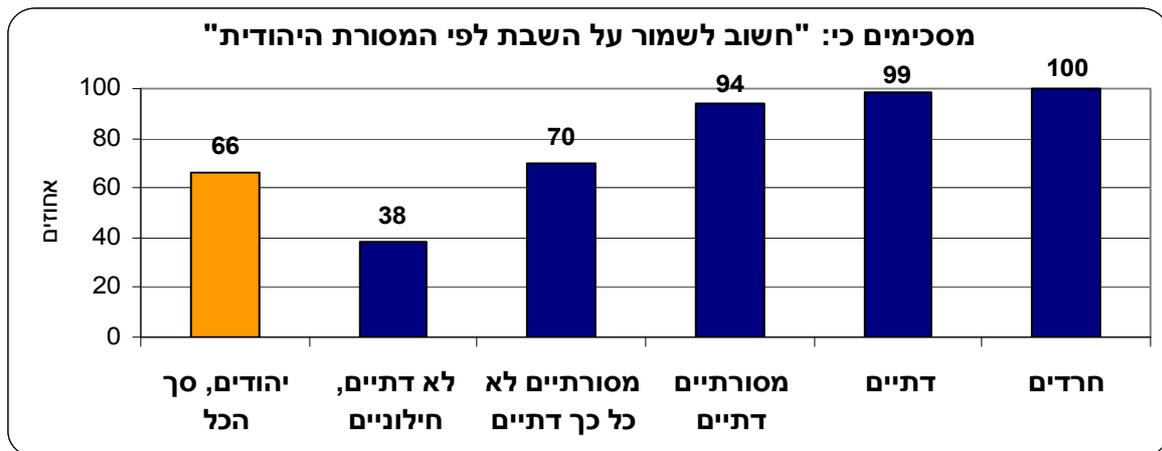
Left to right: Jews, total      Non-religious, secular      Traditional-not so religious  
 Traditional-religious      Religious      Ultra-Orthodox

Agree that: "The views of religious leaders should be heard in the process of policy-making"



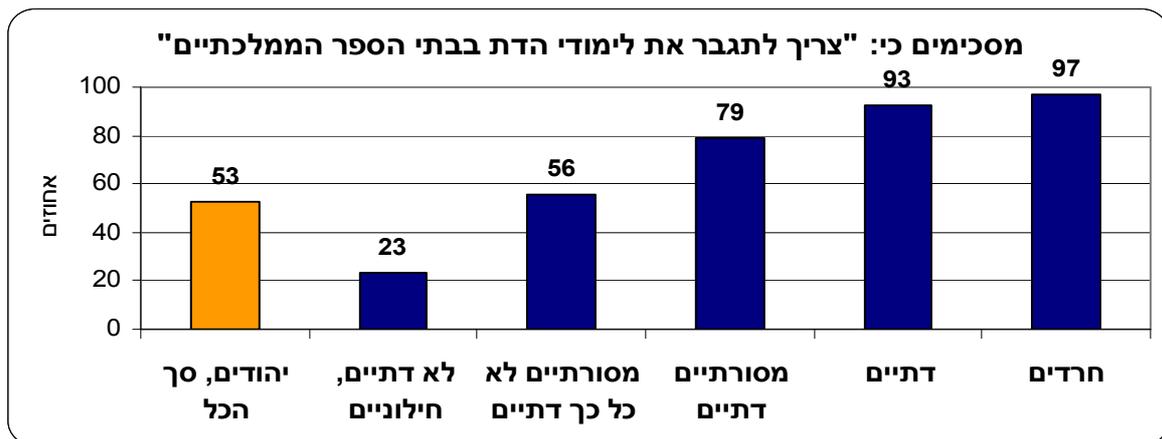
Left to right: Jews, total      Non-religious, secular      Traditional-not so religious  
 Traditional-religious      Religious      Ultra-Orthodox

**Agree that: "The Sabbath should be observed according to Jewish tradition"**



Left to right: Jews, total      Non-religious, secular      Traditional-not so religious  
 Traditional-religious      Religious      Ultra-Orthodox

**Agree that: "Religious studies should be intensified in state schools"**



Left to right: Jews, total      Non-religious, secular      Traditional-not so religious  
 Traditional-religious      Religious      Ultra-Orthodox

**Attitudes about the Sabbath Atmosphere (Opening Places of Entertainment, Sports Events, and Shopping on the Sabbath)**

Most of the Jewish public (64%) are interested in allowing places of entertainment to be open on the Sabbath: 93% of the secular, 76% of the "traditional-not so religious", 35% of the "traditional-religious," and 12% of the religious. A smaller proportion report that they spend time<sup>1</sup> on the Sabbath in places of entertainment, such as restaurants, movie theaters, and pubs: 64% of the secular, 43% of the traditional-not so religious, and 14% of the traditional-religious.

<sup>1</sup> "Often" or "sometimes". Due to considerations of respect for the religious sensibilities of the religious and the ultra-Orthodox, this population was not asked about their use of entertainment facilities on the Sabbath.

Sixty percent of Jews support opening shopping centres **outside** of cities: 87% of the secular, 70% of the traditional-not so religious, 36% of the traditional-religious, and 15% of the religious.

About a third (34%) of the secular and 16% of the traditional-not so religious acknowledged that they shop on the Sabbath.

Less than half of the Jews (46%) support opening shopping malls and stores **within** cities on the Sabbath: 73% of the secular, 48% of the traditional-not so religious, 20% of the traditional-religious, and 6% of the religious.

Sixty-two percent are in favor of having sports events on the Sabbath: 89% of the secular, 73% of the traditional-not so religious, 38% of the traditional-religious, and 13% of the religious.

Fifty-three percent of the Jews support operating public transportation on the Sabbath: 82% of the secular, 57% of the traditional-not so religious, 27% of the traditional-religious, and 10% of the religious.

Fifty-nine percent of the Jews think that it is important to avoid paid work on the Sabbath (except emergency services, such as hospitals, ambulances, and fire department): 33% of the secular, 62% of the traditional-not so religious, 85% of the traditional-religious, 91% of the religious, and 97% of the ultra-Orthodox.

### **Relations between Religious and Secular Jews**

More than half (58%) of the Jewish population rate the relations between religious and secular Jews as "not good."<sup>2</sup>

Secular Jews give a poorer rating to the relations than the religious do: 67% of the secular rate the relations as "not good", compared with 56% of the traditional, 43% of the religious, and 41% of the ultra-Orthodox.

Among the major cities, 86% of **secular** Jerusalem residents rate the relations between religious and secular as "not good", in comparison with 71% of the secular in Haifa, 68% of the secular in Tel Aviv, 67% of the secular in Rishon LeZiyyon, and 63% of the secular in Ashdod.

### **Local Level of Religiosity**

Twenty-seven percent of the Jewish population think that in recent years their area of residence has become "more religious", 6% think that their area of residence has become "less religious".

Among the major cities, half (50%) of the residents of Jerusalem think that their area of residence has become more religious in recent years, compared with 22% of Tel Aviv residents, 23% of Haifa residents, and 18% of Rishon LeZiyyon residents.

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<sup>2</sup> Including respondents who answered "not so good" and "not good at all".

Half of the Jewish population (49%) were of the opinion that it is important to live in an area with a level of religiosity similar to their own.

The Central Bureau of Statistics' Social Survey is an ongoing annual survey that provides information on the welfare of the adult population and on their living conditions, concerning many varied areas of life such as: Dwellings, ownership of automobiles, health, education, use of computer, employment, vacations, relations with family and friends, victimization, volunteering, and economic situation. This Press Release presents findings from a survey conducted from January – December, 2009. Approximately 7,500 people aged 20 and over from all parts of the country were interviewed in the course of the survey; they represented approximately 4.7 million persons of this age group.

For further information:

[Social Survey Page on the CBS Internet Site](#)

[Questionnaire of the 2009 Social Survey](#)

[Israel Central Bureau of Statistics Social Survey Table Generator](#)